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West Europe Report

(FOUO 28/80)



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FRANCE

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WEST EUROPE REPORT

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THEATER NUCLEAR FORCES

FRANCE

MILITARY RESPONSE CAPABILITY DISCUSSED BY GENERAL MERY

Paris ARMEES D'AUJOURD'HUI in French May 80 pp 6-7

[Article by Gen Guy Mery, army chief of staff: "Operational Availability"]

[Text] Deterrence, which is the basis of our defense system, implies the feasibility of immediate implementation of a significant capability of massive nuclear retaliation.

But it also implies having available within the shortest possible time limits combat-ready conventional forces and tactical nuclear forces, so as to meet with maximum speed and effectiveness the various threats that may arise.

Such "operational availability" of our combat forces serves a triple purpose: preparedness against any surprise attack; response in the shortest possible time with an appropriate volume of men and equipment; capability of immediately increasing the volume should circumstances so demand.

It is, to a large extent, with such "operational availability" in mind that the organization of forces, their training, and the warning system responsible for bringing them into action have been planned.

With respect to organization, the "regular" forces constitute a permanent potential, capable of putting into action the most modern equipment available to our armies in terms of the funds allocated to them. Staffed essentially through conscription, which makes it possible at lowest cost, to have available the necessary personnel in terms of both quality and quantity, they also include a certain number of professional units, more specifically trained for possible action abroad.

Reserve personnel, trained in these regular units, can in turn constitute "mobilized" forces, of which placement on active footing by "tapping" the regular units assures cohesion and effectiveness.

Finally, at all hierarchical levels, "operational high commands," set up in peacetime, and with fast, reliable communications systems at their

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disposal, make it possible to guarantee at any time the planning, direction and execution of actions ordered by the government.

As regards training, everything has been planned so that the operational availability of troops is matched by the highest possible combat readiness.

In the regular forces, basic training of young recruits is given in units separate from combat units; in the same way, the training of officers and specialists is the responsibility of schools or special centers.

As a result of this system, costly of course, but realistic, combat units can devote themselves entirely to their training activities, which were restored to a satisfactory level several years ago. The length of service time thus makes it possible to have a high percentage of immediately combat-ready units available at all times.

For the reserve formations, maintenance and improvement training is provided for cadre, while the setting up of organized units is steadily increasing in frequency and number.

With respect to warning, an overall system has been finalized, involving the units as well as the high command.

The system is binding to a greater or lesser degree depending on the type of force:

It is so, to a very high degree, for the air forces responsible for continual surveillance of air space, evaluation of threats and intervention against aircraft of increasingly high performance; for naval forces at sea, which in most cases would only have themselves to depend on to carry out relatively autonomous operations; for tactical nuclear forces, of which rapid deployment is a guarantee of survival.

It may be so to varying degrees, depending on circumstances, for forces directed toward action abroad.

For all other formations, it comprises, at all times, a minimum system making it possible, even during leave periods, to have available a coherent ensemble of organized personnel, officers, and equipment.

Lastly, "permanent operations bases," functioning from top to bottom of the hierarchy, complete the system and make it possible, night and day, to set in motion the first automatic types of measures and to activate, at the appropriate level, the high commands involved.

Thus "operational availability" constitutes one of the important elements in intended overall deterrence.

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By giving our units the ability to place themselves on a war footing within a time-frame varying from a few minutes to a few hours for regular formations and from a few hours to a few days for mobilized formations, the responsible authorities are enabled to take the most appropriate steps, in timely fashion, against the variety of threats that may occur.

In any case it is the only thing that can permit the speedy reaction indispensable in today's world for preventing crises, calming tensions, or containing local conflicts.

That is why I am particularly glad that ARMEES D'AUJOURD'HUI has devoted this month's editorial to this often overlooked aspect of our constant concern.

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COUNTRY SECTION

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

SPANISH-FRENCH COOPERATION IN AVIATION--At the time of the last purchase agreement for Mirage F.1 planes by the Spanish Ministry of Defense in mid-1978 and within the framework of cooperation between the Spanish and French aeronautical industries, more specifically between Dassault-Breguet and Construcciones Aeronauticas, S.A. (CASA), the AMD-BA signed with CASA a cooperative agreement for the promotion and sale of the Spanish CASA C212 Aviocar airplane, in particular to France and French-speaking African countries. In this context, AMD-BA has decided to purchase three C212 planes to be used as demonstration aircraft; the three planes were delivered today. This short-takeoff and-landing twin-turboprop airplane for military or civilian light transport has already received Spanish certification and American FAA certification. French certification is pending, with some flights in this plane having already been made by both AMD-BA pilots and official pilots of the CEV [In-Flight Testing Center]. It should be pointed out that this agreement and this purchase are in conformance with a long-term industrial cooperation policy between the two countries and the two companies, with CASA and AMD-BA working together since 1970 in manufacturing and equipping structural units. The wings of the Falcon 10 are thus made in CASA's Getafe plant near Madrid and part of the Mirage F. 1 fuselage is produced and assembled in CASA's Seville plant. Such cooperation is mutually beneficial and is creating a solid, lasting and tested basis making it possible to view the future with calm confidence. [Text] [Madrid DEFENSA in Spanish No 23, Mar 80 p 75] 11915

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COUNTRY SECTION

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

FDP GENERAL SECRETARY INTERVIEWED ON CAMPAIGN

Hamburg STERN in German 22 May 80 pp 250-252

[Interview with FDP General Secretary Guenter Verheugen: "Comfort From the Chancellor"]

[Text] After the election defeat in North Rhine-Westphalia the FDP is looking for help from the Social Democrat Helmut Schmidt.

Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt received a depressed guest. Two days after the FDP debacle of Duesseldorf, Federal Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher felt compelled to call on the boss. The sole subject of the hourlong talk: how Bonn's foreign policy is to be formulated and represented jointly in the future. For disagreements between the chancellor and his deputy had contributed to the election defeat and the elimination of the FDP from the North Rhine-Westphalian Landtag, as the experts in the central government office in Bonn and in the headquarters of the FDP have in the meantime ascertained.

While Schmidt in the past in all his testimonials of solidarity with the United States has also always pointed to the independent interests of the FRG, Genscher--just like the CDU/CSU--evoked almost only the loyalty to the alliance with America. This the liberal voters evidently did not accept. In order to avoid a similar blow during the Bundestag elections on 5 October, the two agreed to obviate any misunderstanding concerning foreign policy through early arrangements.

Already 2 days earlier the two had straightened out their inner relationship. Shortly after it transpired that the SPD will govern with an absolute majority in Duesseldorf, the chancellor administered advice by telephone from Hamburg. As Helmut Kohl had done earlier, Schmidt gave encouragement to the loser, Genscher: "Head up!" He, too, Schmidt assured the depressed FDP-man, had no explanation for the election result. He indicated that this would, of course, not change anything with regard to the alliance in Bonn. He instructed close collaborators: "We now must lead the FDP by the hand."

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For his confidents this motto came as something of a surprise. Daily they can observe how well Helmut Schmidt likes himself in his role as the supreme representative of the interests of all Germans. And the enticement to govern without a troublesome partner, like Konrad Adenauer at one time, is great after the Duesseldorf victory. "Let us try to have our way in Bonn, too," party associates are encouraging their Bonn leadership. But it is giving them the cold shoulder. SPD-Deputy Chairman Wischnewski: "Those are day-dreams." The fat fellow is thinking like the chancellor: "It would be unrealistic to believe that we could achieve an absolute majority on the federal level."

The love to the hitherto existing partner is not onesided. To exclude any suspicion that the Liberals might after all succumb to the enticements of the Union, the top FDP leadership in Bonn and the FDP-fraction vowed not to let any doubts arise in the future in regard to their loyalty to the alliance. The downward trend of the opposition is making things easy for the SPD and FDP. Liberal Fraction-Deputy Chairman Hans-Guenter Hoppe: "We would have to be crazy to enter an alliance with the loser."

In spite of the loyalty oath and promise of assistance by the chancellor, the FDP strategists know that their election goal—continuation of the governing alliance—is by no means achieved. For their freedom to maneuver between adaptation and liberal expression is small. If during the election campaign the FDP joins battle with the SPD, it comes under suspicion of wanting to trip up Helmut Schmidt. If, however, it is submissive to the point of self-denial, many voters could very well ask why they should vote for the FDP in any case. "Both would be fatal," Hoppe knows.

The prescriptions for survival of the Free Democrats were elucidated by FDP General Secretary Guenter Verheugen in an interview with STERN:

STERN: In the Landtag elections in North Rhine-Westphalia the FDP went down in defeat. Is it threatened with the final Out in the Bundestag election on 5 October?

Verheugen: It still has a chance to survive if it recognizes why it was kicked out of the Landtag.

STERN: What were the reasons?

Verheugen: The FDP missed the subject of the election campaign. Instead of making it clear that every vote for the FDP is a rebuff to Strauss, the party ended up offside bogged down in details of Land politics. Moreover, the attempts of the CDU to chum up with the FDP should have been rejected in an unequivocal manner.

STERN: Will your party learn from the failure of North Rhine-Westphalia?

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Verheugen: We will make a statement concerning the continuation of the social-liberal coalition with Helmut Schmidt without any ifs or buts. Point two: The subject of the Bundestag election campaign will also include the existence of the FDP. Thirdly, we will point out the dangers of an absolute majority of the SPD. It is really not desirable to become dependent on minorities in the SPD or on the German Labor Union Federation (DGB). And, fourth, we must hold on to our program design, through which I have tried to make clear the reform-oriented, progressive profile of the FDP...

STERN: ...yet it is precisely this program which is controversial in your party...

Verheugen: ...yes, it is being said that Verheugen is making the FDP into a party of drug addicts and homosexuals. I am convinced that we must especially look after the interests of groups—by no means small by the way—which do not have influential lobbies. It is not enough to take a stand only for the approximately half million leading salaried employees or minority groups which earn more than DM 100,000 a year.

STERN: So on whom do you have your sight set?

Verheugen: For example, the members of animal protection, nature conservation and environmental protection organizations, a total of over 3 milion, single parents and people pursuing alternative life styles—more than 5 million. And of course, women, who are not at all a minority, but the absolute majority of the population...

STERN: ...and that the program critics do not want...

Verheugen: ...they demand that this be deleted from the program: the demand for an antidiscrimination law, the demand for legal abortions in connection with Article 218, the demand for the recognition of alternative life styles—all positions in which the FDP plays a leading role. Here there will be no retreating for me.

STERN: Are you only concerned about getting votes here?

Verheugen: No. A liberal party is expected to take a position against discrimination, wherever is turns up.

STERN: It is difficult for the FDP to show its independence. If it takes position side by side with the SPD, people say that the FDP adapts too much. If it develops its own profile against the SPD, it is the mischief-maker in the coalition. How do you propose to get around this dilema?

Verheugen: The more unambiguous our coalition behavior is, the easier it is to present and settle conflicts within the coalition. There are many problem areas in which we have to carry the SPD to the hunt, for example in the liberalization of criminal law or in the establishment of strict constitutional

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rules for the security services. Dangerous, by contrast, are quarrels in which the FDP finds itself in agreement with the opposition...

STERN: As happened in the policy of detente...

Verheugen: ...!t is not advisable to develop a common profile with the opposition against the partner in government.

STERN: Some of your party friends want to be especially smart and propagate the slogan: Yes to Schmidt and no to the socialist SPD.

Verheugen: Many people would like to have a CDU/FDP coalition under Federal Chancellor Schmidt. But seriously: One cannot say that we are entering into the coalition solely because of Schmidt. Nor can it be said that we don't agree to a coalition solely because of Strauss. What, then, do we do the moment the Union parties present us with another candidate? There, too, we have to say no; after all, we had already decided to continue the coalition with the Social Democrats before the candidate Strauss was presented to us. The candidate Strauss makes it almost unnecessary for us to provide substantive reasons for our No to the Union.

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COUNTRY SECTION

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

POSITION OF CSU GENERAL SECRETARY NOTED

Hamburg STERN in German 22 May 80 p 256

[Article by Werner P. D'hein and Tyll Schoenemann: "The Blond Guillotine"]

[Text] Edmund Stoiber, the man who has the ear of Union chancellor candidate Franz Josef Strauss, is increasingly coming under fire from his political friends.

"What is the difference between a terrorist and the CSU general secretary?" is a question that General Secretary Edmund Stoiber, of all people, nowadays likes to ask, coming up with the answer at the same time: "Behind a terrorist there are at least three sympathizers."

The irony of the vigorous, almost 40-year-old man is well-founded, for he has probably only Franz Josef Strauss behind him. Now that the Union chancellor candidate has lost the duel with Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, Strauss fans believe that they have found in Stoiber an accomplice in the debacle.

The general secretary, so people are saying, especially in the CSU Land group of the Bundestag, isolates Strauss in Munich and gives him incomplete, at times incorrect advice.

His solo actions, too, are meeting with increasingly strong criticism in his own ranks. He plotted a dangerous discussion of the breaking up of the united labor unions (Enterprise boss Rolf Rodenstock: "Absolutely unnecessary.") He threw National Socialists and Socialists together—for which he was named, derisively, "the greatest General Secretary of all times (GROEGAZ)" by the MUENCHNER MERKUR, which is usually friendly toward the CSU. And he defended, according to a Bonn CSU deputy, "with the greatest possible clumsiness," the "rats and blowflies"—verdict of his master Strauss concerning the leftist writer Bernt Engelmann.

"The general secretary is supposed to be a bellwether," says a CSU captain in Bonn. "But Stoiber is more like a wolf who is constantly playing havor with the herd."

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Thus far the reproaches do not disturb Stoiber. For he enjoys full backing by Strauss, who generously offered him the familiar "Du," while Franz Josef Strauss still used the formal "Sie" when talking with Stoiber's predecessor Tandler.

Stoiber can get away with calling the CSU fraction chairman in the Bavarian Landtag, Gustl Lang, "our carnival orator" and the unctuous Landtag president Franz Heubl "our preacher." During the first session of the board of directors after the election in North Rhine-Westphalia, according to a participant in the session, he pounced "rather rudely" on no less than the entire Munich cabinet. He complained about insufficient support for his idol Franz Josef Strauss. "It is not enough to drive through Bavaria in a car with the white and blue pennant."

The CSU dignitaries are still puzzling over how they can go against the "blond guillotine" (as SPD Bundestag delegate Dieter Lattmann calls him). They know how easily Strauss can be influenced. A Bavarian minister: "Often one has the impression he is right who saw him last. And that, it so happens, is usually Stoiber."

Of what quality Stoiber's strategy is at times, was spread in Munich shortly after the defeat of the Union on the Rhine and Ruhr. The general secretary and his associates, it was intimated, were not really desirous of a CDU victory in Duesseldorf. They were afraid that the Christian Democrats and their general secretary, Stoiber-enemy Heiner Geissler, would then have rested on their laurels instead of launching a campaign for Strauss in October. As the MUENCHNER MERKUR pointedly said: "Superstrategists."

In vain CSU Deputy Chairman Friedrich Zimmermann already admonished his captain Strauss last October to keep the quick Stoiber under tighter control, to remove himself from the Munich atmosphere and to develop more of a profile on the political stage in Bonn. Besides good intentions, it led to nothing. "They go on muddling through down there and believe they can win the Bundestag election in the same way as the election in Regensburg South," the Bonn CSU pros grumble about their party leadership.

Stoiber did not even have enough sense to organize the press contacts for his chancellor candidate. Journalists who request interviews with Strauss or explanations from Strauss are shuffled back and forth between the Munich state chancellery, the CSU party management, and two Strauss offices in Bonn--at times for weeks.

"Since Stoiber has entered the picture we have begun to find out what we had in Tandler," people are now saying in the central CDU office in Bonn, which often enough had grown exasperated with the outspoken, obstinate predecessor of Stoiber, but today certifies that he had at least experience. Only CDU Federal Business Manager Ulf Fink declares himself satisfied with his Munich partner: "We work well together." The CDU manager has good excuses: During Tandler's time he was not yet in charge in the Adenauer House.

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COUNTRY SECTION

FRANCE

FUTURE OF TROPICAL RESEARCH GROUP EXAMINED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 2 May 80 pp 1024-1025

[Article: "The Future of French Tropical Research Organizations"]

[Text] It seems unnecessary to mention the importance and prestige which the eight specialized organizations for "overseas" research have acquired. These are: the Technical Center for Tropical Forestry (CTFT), the Institute for Livestock and Veterinary Medicine for Tropical Countries (IEMVT), the French Institute of Coffee, Cocoa and Other Stimulating Plants (IFCC), the Institute for Tropical Agricultural Research and Food Crops (IRAT), the Institute for Rubber Research (IRCA), the Institute for Research on Cotton and Exotic Textiles (IRCT), the Institute for Research on Fruits and Citrus Fruits (IRFA), the Institute for Research on Edible Oils and Oleaginous Products (IRHO).

Many heads of state and African ministers have eulogized the institutes, and we will only mention one of the most important African heads of state, President Houphoet-Boigny who, in a speech alluding to the spectacular results of agricultural development in his country, asserted that these results were in great part due to the French research institutes.

For their part, the French authorities have always praised the work of the institutes, whose trusteeship and, in great part, financing they provide. Didn't one minister of cooperation consider them to be "one of the best jewels" of his department? How much other testimony, this convincing, could be quoted.

For more than 15 years, however, these organizations, whose merits are celebrated on all sides and which foreigners envy us, have constantly been the object of plans for reform, indeed, for merger—that is, in fact, for abolition by transferral. Moreover, the insistence and perseverance displayed by the public authorities in developing and carrying out these plans are difficult for many of those affected to understand, as are the motives behind the plans in question in most cases.

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The Creation of GERDAT

Well before the creation of GERDAT [Studies and Research Group for Tropical Agriculture Development], that is, before 1970, the idea of merging "the eight" in order to form a large tropical agriculture institute had been proposed several times. But concentration of the departments and strengthening of research activities were also expected from this operation. This would seem to be misunderstanding the theoretical and practical problems which the institutes face and forgetting that their highly praised effectiveness is due to their relative autonomy, to the great flexibility of their functioning and to their specificity.

Consequently, abolishing these organizations in order to integrate their departments into a single, vast, multipurpose institution, weighted down by more or less constrictive administrative burdens and a paralyzing bureaucracy would be tantamount, on one hand, to eliminating the spirit of initiative and the dynamism which animates them and, on the other hand, in terms of effectiveness, of diluting in many laboratories with single disciplinary specializations, research which it is always important to have agronomists highly specialized in a particular crop synthesize.

The reservations expressed by amny officials in France and abroad who are devoted to the permanence of the institutes and who are beneficiaries of the results of their work has kept at bay a radical reform which evolved in 1970 into a campaign to group the institutes within an Economic Interest Group [GIE), GERDAT, already mentioned.

The solution was satisfactory, since the structure adopted, the flexible one of a GIE, made it possible to realize the anticipated union while preserving the partners' personalities, autonomy and specificity. It also made it possible for the trusteeship authorities to satisfy some of their very strong desires with the capability to intervene in the research programs, better inform the countries concerned and tighten the perhaps too strained bonds which formerly existed between "the eight", with the consequences which one can imagine for the conduct of their work.

Occurring at a time when many states were setting up their national research structures after 10 years of independence, this initiative was also of a nature to facilitate their relations with the institutions concerned. As we have seen, through a financial delegation GERDAT secured the capability to accentuate certain actions or minimize—indeed, to suppress—others in this case, and this within the framework of the states' development policy. The plan for regrouping the laboratories of the institutes, which are scattered around Paris and its suburbs and often poorly equipped, also argued strongly for this concentration of efforts in unity of action.

GERDAT was thus created in 1970 on the initiative of the public authorities, and it should be objectively acknowledged that after a "shake down" period the functioning of its departments, run by an administrator whose high quality is unanimously recognized, gave full satisfaction to its members. Everyone

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particularly applauded the creation of the Inter-Institute Center in Mont-pellier, which in terms of its importance, its resources and the quality of its research workers is undoubtedly the most important institution in the world for conducting research in tropical countries.

Moreover, an idea of GERDAT's influence can be had by simply examining the annexed table, which gives some general indications of its importance, and the list of countries in which its members' activities are carried out on a permanent or temporary basis.

Modification of the Statutes

It might have been thought that this important reform would be definitive. That was not the case, since the preparation of new plans for concentration or merger, now with ORSTOM (Overseas Scientific and Technical Research Office), now with the INRA (French National Institute of Agronomic Research), continued to maintain a sense of uneasiness among the personnel of the eight institutes. Thus the creation of a public institution in 1975 was only avoided thanks to the understanding of a statesman newly appointed to join the ministrial team.

The institutes were still in existence. But the public authorities felt that GERDAT's operation was not completely satisfactory in the absence of the anticipated merger and that it was advisable to reform its statutes. Thus the next year the latters were modified in order to "strengthen the effectiveness of the institutions."

Among other functions, GERDAT received those of participating in the definition of major trends in French research policy, evaluating the needs for financing (operation and investments) necessary to realize programs, distributing loans and representing its members to the authorities and national, foreign and international organizations. It was also charged with studying inter-institute programs and researching all measures suitable for increasing the latters' efficiency or reducing the cost of their apparatus, particularly by the creation of joint departments or laboratories.

Finally, some three years later, that is, in 1979, a new plan was communicated to the GERDAT officials and to its eight members. Again, it was a question "of improving the efficiency of the organizations concerned while retaining their structure, of adapting the research apparatus cooperatively in terms of the changes resulting from the states' evolution and of enlarging their geographic zones of action." This was accompanied by extremely flattering remarks on the prestige and high quality of the institutes' work.

It might be thought that these arrangements would be integrated in a general comment on the French cooperation policy and on the search for new definitions and directions. That is why a correlative proposal for changes in the GERDAT statutes was worked out by the trusteeship authorities. By conferring new powers, these tended to strengthen further GERDAT's control over "the eight" and to ensure a permanent functional liason with ORSTOM by substituting a joint presidency over the two organizations for the present GERDAT president.

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These new arrangements, of course, did not bring about any change in the institute's statutes. But on the other hand the reform introduced to GERDAT, which provided for the transferral of an essential part of the powers which the institute directors held to its new bicephalous president made the former unable to assume their own principal responsibilities.

It should also be added that this joint presidency gave free rein to many hypotheses, the most valid being that of future integration into ORSTOM.

Such an eventuality seems not to have been eliminated, given the quite different but complementary agricultural designations of the two organizations, GERDAT and ORSTOM, the latter being especially oriented toward so-called basic research while the former is essentially oriented toward research applied to development.

Another consoling consideration supports this theory: the imbalance existing between these two organizations with ORSTOM on one hand, solidly structured administratively and scientifically and comprising a very large staff of researchers, and GERDAT on the other hand, whose whole—the administrative and scientific core and the eight satellites—is far from being able to rival the former in importance.

Continued Effort to Adapt

What is to be thought of this state of events? First, that the tropical research organizations, like any enterprises, are facing events which threaten them and against which they must react by adapting. In fact, the political evolution of states in Africa and elsewhere is creating a new order which necessitates constant reflection followed by an effort to adapt on the part of those who work there in order to reconcile their activities with or within the framework of the new national structures.

The institutes apparently have never resisted this adaptation since they were always fully aware that satisfaction of the young states' needs required them to display great flexibility in form and means, which their statutory structure permits (the law of 1901 or association for six of them). Aided in this task by GERDAT, they have been able to effect this change under very honorable conditions.

Since nothing was ever hurt in this way, they seem completely prepared further to perfect this effort at "overseas" adaptation, if necessary, and their basic desire has always been, and remains, to satisfy the states' desires as best they can in order better to participate in or even to be integrated into, their agricultural development.

It should also be emphasized that research is a work requiring time and labor and which in order to be fruitful requires scholarship, perseverance in action and also the existence of a "climate" of serenity and confidence for those who devote themselves to it. The uncertainty of the future of these institutions, which have been held together episodically for too long, is sapping this

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confidence and is giving rise to very understandable uneasiness among the administrators and their collaborators on all levels, the consequences of which for the good progress of the work, although difficult to evaluate, are no less certain.

MARCHES TROPICAUX has always followed the remarkable work of the French research institutes in the tropical world with deep interest and never misses an opportunity to spread information in its columns. While it does not behove it to take a position on the cogency of the reasons which underlie the policy followed with respect to them, it can nonetheless be their advocat for expressing the wish that, if no major political event happens unexpectedly in the meantime, the institutes finally, and for a long time, be liberated from the oppressive preoccupation with their future.

Size and Presence of the French Tropically-Oriented Research Organizations In the World

The eight tropically oriented French research organizations mentioned cover all sectors of agriculture, animal husbandry and forestry. Their staffs totaled 1,333 at the end of 1978, 50 percent of them engineers and researchers. Their total resources were F 313.8 million for fiscal year 1978, of which approximately 50 percent came from public authorities (equipment and operations subsidies); the rest comprising subsidies from foreign countries, treaties and conventions from the same source or from international organizations, and their own resources.

The following table indicates the countries where the organizations mentioned have a permanent or temporary presence.

FRANCE

Paris (and neighboring suburbs): The headquarters of GERDAT and all the organizations. Administrative and technical departments. Financial departments. Documentation and publication departments. Research laboratories (IEMVT and CTFT).

Montpellier: GERDAT--Inter-Institute Research Center

OTHER COUNTRIES

- + Permanent Presence
- Temporary Presence

Africa

	Cape Verde+	Congo+ Ivory Coast+
Burundi+	Chad+	Egypt
Cameroon+	Comoro Islands	Ethiopia+

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-	Ghana + Mau: Guinea - Mau: Guinea-Bisseau + Moza Kenya + Nig Liberia + Nig Libya - Reur	occo ritania+ ritius ambique er+ eria nion+	Senegal Sierra Leone Sudan Togo Tunisia Upper Volta Zaire Zambia
	Mideast		
	Afghanistan+ Iran+ Iraq	Saudi A	Yemen Arabia
	Latin America and Carribea	n	Asia and the Pacific
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COUNTRY SECTION

SPAIN

SUAREZ'POPULARITY CONTINUES VERY LOW AMONG CITIZENS

Madird CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 6 Apr 80 pp 16, 17, 19

[Text] Prime Minister Adolfo Suarez can take the plane and in a spectacular sweep such as that of 26 January 1980 appear unexpectedly in Washington and talk, practically on a first-name basis, with President Jimmy Carter about the international crisis unleashed in the Middle East.

But Suarez can also, in a 180-degree turn in government policy, call for a referendum on an issue on which he later calls for abstention. The people of Andalusia have not yet forgiven Suarez but, especially, the result of the voting of 28 February 1980 was the first thing to call attention to the doubtful strategy of the UCD [Democratic Center Union].

Suarez won fairly easily at the general elections in March 1979 but, at the time of giving orders, the UCD continues to be the Hamlet of Spanish politics. It called the referendums so that the Basque country and Catalonia might decide their autonomous future and then, at the hour of truth, what the UCD could have capitalized on as a victory—the Bylaws of the Basque and Catalonian parliaments are a genuine triumph in state policy—the UCD met a bitter setback.

Suarez went abroad projecting a new image of Spain, hurried to international forums, dazzled Chancellor Helmu: Schmidt with his ideas about the Middle East crisis up to the point that Suarez became Schmidt's defender before President Carter even though in domestic politics Suarez has shown himself to be remote, evasive, and silent.

Suarez has made the transition toward democracy but the left thrashes him hard without either his or his party's providing a convincing explanation of the events.

The sharp tongue of the PSOE [Spanish Socialist Workers Party], Alfonso Guerra, calls Suarez the Mississippi gambler, bids him to resign every so often, but in the meantime one of the great Buddhas of international politics, Helmut Schmidt himself, has not qualms in suggesting the possibility that Adolfo Suarez may become the president of the European Parliament within 3 years.

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Too, Suarez' party propitiates, pushes, and does what is almost impossible so that, for example, the Law of Teaching Centers—so little attractive to the left wing of the UCD—may be approved but in the meantime the Prime Ministe is saying that nothing will shift him to the right.

But has Suarez shifted to the right? If one listens to Francisco Fernandez Ordonez, then yes. Lately, Fraga, too, has attacked Suarez less.

What Spaniards Think

And this Suarez who has made the lengthy trek of the transition period, who has lately become anxious because of international politics, has shown himself evasive about domestic problems, who barely leaves Moncloa palace, who does not speak in parliament, who is joited by the right and by the left—how do Spaniards see him?

Well, we say that they do not look too favorably on him. While in September 1976 some 59.7 percent of Spaniards believed that the administration of Prime Minister Suarez had improved since the start of his government, by March 1978 this percentage had already plummented by 11.9 percent and while, by the end of that year, his popularity had climbed a few percentage points until it reached 18.2 percent, now, in March 1980, his rating has again slipped to 12.5 percent.

A poll entrusted by CAMBIO 16 to the firm of Metra Seis based on the same questions as other polls undertaken in the months of the years mentioned evidences that Suarez' image is experiencing many difficulties in climbing back from the precipitous drop which started to occur in the early months of 1978.

Terrorism, unemployment, economic problems, the swings of government policy, the loss of power itself in an extremely difficult transition period may be some of the underlying causes, but at the hour of truth what has disappointed Spaniards most is that Suarez has not fulfilled his party's program.

When Metra Seis polled a sample of 1,965 Spaniards on what their opinion of Suarez was after the latest elections, the percentages were broken down as follows: It had improved for 9.8 percent of the respondents, worsened for 27.8 percent, remained the same for 39.4 percent, while 23 percent gave no answer.

They Do Not Know, They Do Not Answer

What changes had occurred in these results compared to those obtained by the same question asked in March 1978? Responses of "improved" or "worsened" remained practically at the same level—in March 1978 opinions of Suarez had improved among 10.6 percent and worsened among 28.4 percent—but among those whose opinion "remains the same" or who responded "no answer" substantial variations occurred.

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In 1978, for 46.1 percent of the Spaniards, their opinion of Prime Minister Suarez remained the same as in the earlier elections while 15 percent did not answer. Now, in March 1980, these two figures changed to 39.4 percent for those whose opinion "remains the same" and 23 percent who responded "no answer."

In this last case a visible circumstance in the March 1980 poll was the notable increase of those who did not know or did not answer.

Successes and Errors

For example, when in the set of polls which Metra Seis has taken for CAMBIO 16 the question was asked whether Saurez had greater or less support than at the start of his administration, in the "no answer" category the following changes occurred: 6.8 percent gave that response in September 1976, 22 percent in March 1978, 24.4 percent in December 1978, and 27.1 percent in March 1980.

Respondents in this group did not know or did not answer presumably as a direct result of the silence of Suarez, of his using his offices at Moncloa palace as a refuge from public rallies or speeches in parliament or addresses on Spanish Television.

And on what basis did Spaniards evaluate whether Suarez had improved or become worse? Among those who believed that he had improved—9.8 percent of those polled—the largest proportion of them, 20.8 percent, believed that it was because Suarez was doing well, got along well with the government, or because the government was more stable. The percentage next in size accounting for this improvement related to Saurez' foerign policy which, in the opinion of 18.2 percent, was good.

And for those in whose opinion the head of government had become worse—which is what 27.8 percent of those polled believed—why was this so? First came the 27.3 percent who openly believed that it was because Suarez had not carried out his political program. They were followed by 18.5 percent who answered that the reason for Suarez' drop in popularity was that he had accomplished nothing, that everything continued as before, and that they saw no improvement.

In the next string of charges against the Prime Minister were those made by 15.4 percent of the negative respondents claiming that their opinion of Suarez was worse because they perceived him as a political fraud and that he did not have a neat and clearcut policy. Another 12.6 percent asserted that the country was worse off and 11.4 percent that their opinion of Suarez had slipped because there was more unemployment.

Prime Minister's Female Supporters

The sociologists of Spanish politics have repeated boringly in the past few years that an extremely large number of the votes cast for Suarez were by women. And now, what do the Prime Minister's female supporters think?

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Well, to begin with, they seem to be more disappointed than the men because at the time of answering whether Suarez now has greater or lesser support than at the start of his administration, 19.5 percent of the men said greater while only 17 percent of the women thought so.

Thus, does this mean that the women believe that Suarez enjoys less support? Not so either. Some 38.2 percent of the men thought so, that Suarez' support was now less, but among the women this percentage did not exceed 28.7 percent. As to the question of whether support for Suarez was the same, responses by the men and women were very close: 22.8 percent for the former and 19.9 percent for the latter.

Accordingly, what happened, where have the votes of the women gone? To the typical category of the present Spanish situation, to the "no answer" category. No fewer than 34.4 percent of the women polled fell into that group compared to only 19.4 percent of the men.

And in terms of regions, how is the Prime Minister doing? He is most liked—if by liking one understands that people believe that he now has greater support than at the start of his administration—in the northern region where 24.4 percent held that Suarez enjoyed greater support. For 34.1 percent of northerners Suarez' support was now less; for 18.7 percent it was the same; and 22.8 percent did not answer that question.

And where is Prime Minister Suarez least popular if liking less is understood to mean that the respondents feel that he has less support now? There is no doubt about it, it is in the central region where no fewer than 40.8 percent of those polled stated that indeed support for Suarez was now less. In this same region only 16.6 percent found that support for Suarez was greater; 16.1 percent answered that it was the same, and the remaining 26.5 percent did not answer.

Neither do the Catalonians like Suarez a lot. Only 13.4 percent of them saw support for Suarez to be greater now than at the start of his administration while 33 percent thought that it was less and 29.8 percent did not answer.

Barcelona and Madrid Do Not Support Suarez

As regards regions, if we examine the two largest urban centers in Spain-Madrid and Barcelona--responses to the question of whether support for Suarez was now greater or less than at the start indicated disappointment with the Prime Minister: 49.3 percent of the respondents in Barcelona and 44.7 percent of those in Madrid did not hesitate to say that Suarez' support was less. Only for 8 percent of the former and 17.3 percent of the latter was this support for Suarez greater now.

With many believing that Adolfo Suarez enjoys little support, without Spaniards' opinion of him having improved, and also without his prestige having changed much since the last elections, the head of government, locked up in Moncloa palace, does not raise his head even though he claims to be one of the umpires of the crisis being witnessed by the world at this time.

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Popularity of Adolfo Suarez

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Question: Would you say that Prime Minister Suarez now has greater or less support that at the start of his administration?

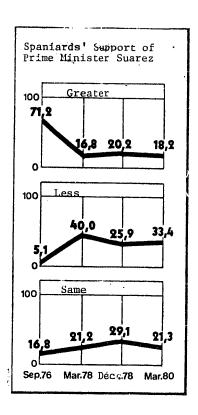
	September 1976	March 1978	December 1978	March 1980
Greater support	71.2	16.8	20.2	18.2
Less support	5.1	40.0	25.9	33.4
Same	16.8	21.2	29.1	
Don't know/no answer	6.8	22.0	24.7	21.3 27.1

Question: Compared to the start of his administration, has your opinion of Prime Minister Suarez improved or become worse?

	September 1976	March 1978	December 1978	March 1980
Improved	59.7	11 0		
•		11.9	18.2	12.5
Become worse	6.5	28.3	16.8	28.3
Same	28.5	44.1	50.7	36.5
Don't know/no answer	5.3	15.8	14.4	22.6

Question: From the holding of the last elections to date, has your opinion of Prime Minister Suarez improved or become worse?

	March 1978	March 1980
Improved	10.6	
•	* * * *	9.8
Become worse	28.4	27.8
Same	46.1	39.4
Don't know/no answer	15.0	23.0



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	16.2	10,5	18.5	18,7	19,0	20,7 42,8	17.9	16.6	15.7 21.9	19,5	17,0 28,7	24.4	13,4	18.2 21.5	20.6 32.7	44
Menor 64	33.4	34.3	42,1 21,0		20.0	21,3	21,6	22.8	19.2	22.8	19,9	18,7	23,8 29,8	24,1 36,1	24.5 22.2	2
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He emperado 4	23.3 34.5	1 23	33.3	27,2 33,4	34.8	38.9	37,0	35.4	32,7	39.4	37.6	35,0	24.8	40,5	35,5	1
M3 NC	22.6	10	16,7	24,8	39.3	12.2	23,0	28.4	14.2	-						_
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He empeorado Permanece iguel 24 N/S N/C	19,4	1	41,4	37,9 23,2	38,6 34,8	12.6	39,5 23,3	37,3	19,2 17,0	38.6	40,2 28,1	37.3		40.9 28.5	39,8 19,9	
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		45.5	21.4	17.6	20,6	24.0	15.2	22.0	20,0	19.8	22.2 6.2	20.5		20,0 12.0	23.4 8,5	
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Key to table:		
1. Suarez in 1980	36.	He de norm that I (I at
2. Social class	37.	He is very steady/he keeps his word
3. Age	38.	
4. Sex	39.	as racedom/ democracy
5. Region	٠,٠	Because of his foreign policy/he is a thorough statesman
Upper/upper middle	40.	Other answers
7. Middle	41.	
8. Lower middle	41.	Reasons why your opinion of the Prime Minister has become worse
9. Lower	42.	He has become worse
10. Up to 34 years	43.	He has deno
11. 55 and over	43.	He has done nothing/everything con-
12. Men		tinues as usual/improvements are not
13. Women	44.	evident
14. Northern Spain	44.	He has not carried out his program/he
15. Catalonia	<i>l.</i> E	has not carried out what he promised
16. Mediterranean coast	45.	We are doing worse in all respects
17. Andalusia	46.	The cost of living/prices/inflation/
18. Central Spain	47.	economic crisis are worse
19. Total number of respondents		Terrorism and public order are worse
20. Does Prime Minister Suarez now	48.	There is more unemployment
enjoy greater or less support th	49.	Because of the question of autonomy/
at the start of his administrati	an o-2	because of the question of Andalusia
21. Greater support		Tit.
22. Less support	50.	His political position/he does not
23. Same	C 1	have a neat and clearcut policy
24. Don't know/no answer	51.	He does not have clear ideas/he does
25. Has your opinion of the Prime		not have a serious plan of government/
Minister improved or become worse	- 0	he does not have the stature of a
26. It has improved	e (head of government/he does not follow
26A. He has improved		a consistent standard
27. It has become worse		77 1
28. It has remained the same	52.	He does not show himself as he really
29. Has your opinion of the Prime Mir	- 50	is/he has not defined himself
ister improved or become worse		
since the holding of the last	54.	He is shifting to the right/he support
elections?		capitalism
30. Reasons why your opinion of the	55.	Because of public opinion (what
Prime Minister has improved		people say)
31. He has more experience	56.	He does not care about the worker
32. He is doing a good job/he is more	57.	Because of the Worker's Statute
effective now/he is leading the	•	
government well/the government is		
more stable	•	
33. He is very active/he works a lot		
34. He works a lot for the people/he	haa -	5 G 4
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COUNTRY SECTION

SPAIN

PSOE'S GONZALEZ HIGHLY REGARDED BY SPANIARDS

Madrid CAMBIO 16 in Spanish 13 Apr 80 pp 28, 29, 31

[Text] Spaniards continue to like Felipe Gonzalez: 64.1 percent of them believe that the Socialist leader would do as well as or better than [Prime Minister] Adolfo Suarez.

Only 10 percent of Spaniards think, on the contary, that the secretary general of the PSOE [Spanish Socialist Workers Party] would do worse than the incumbent Prime Minister, The remaining 25.5 percent did not answer the question posed by Metra Seis enterprise in this connection.

The poll was taken through 1,965 interviews between 11 February and 10 March 1980, that is, before the elections of the Basque and Catalonian parliaments in which both the UCD [Democratic Center Union] and the PSOE suffered serious setbacks in favor of the nationalist parties.

He tries to make it clear that the PSOE is not against businessmen, he jolts the communists hard, is implacable with the UCD, and lately has barely spoken to Adolfo Suarez. Felipe Gonzalez, since he defeated the Marxists of his party at the special PSOE congress in September 1979, has become more cautious, more realistic, less of the "alternative of power" figure, and more the leader concerned with holding his party's controls.

This 38-year-old Sevillian, married with three children, one of the five best known faces in Spain, secretary general of the leading opposition party, one of the principal artisans of the policy of consensus, has been sharp in recently characterizing Suarez with the comment: "He doesn't care."

But the Socialist leader, who entered Spanish politics in sweeping fashion and within a few months stopped being a nonentity and became one of Spain's politicians with the most promising future, has also had to bite the dust of the pacts—because it refuses to reach an agreement with them, among other reasons—and for the UCD the Socialists are inconsistent, demagogic, electoralist, irresponsible, and so on.

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This is a long "and so on" which on most occasions is provoked by those sharp comments, deliberate, suggestive, of the vitriolic tongue of the PSOE--that of its Number 2 man, Alfonso Guerra.

Felipe, the Counterweight

They act as counterweights: While Guerra lashes out, very often like an absurd personality, Gonzalez mitigates the nonsense from a posture of moderation and earnestness. The PSOE says what it has to say through the mouth of Guerra but Felipe Gonzalez does not fret.

The obvious proof that he does not get hot under the collar is that when CAMBIO 16 entrusted the Metra Seis firm with determining how Spaniards view Adolfo Suarez and Felipe Gonzalez the latter had a clear edge in the confidence of his fellow-citizens.

Some 23.4 percent of Spaniards answered the question saying that Felipe Gonzalez deserved more of their confidence as prime minister than Adolfo Suarez. Some 40.7 percent gave a more ecclectic answer: They harbored the same degree of confidence for both politicians. Some 10.4 percent noted that they had more confidence in Suarez while 25.5 percent did not answer.

This high percentage of "no answer" responses was one of the dominant features of the poll. Why was it so--for a lack of confidence, for a lack of information, because of skeptcism? For the UCD and the PSOE it should be a cause of concern that 38.7 percent of Spaniards should not answer the question whether the PSOE would do better than the UCD in government.

And as is very common in political polls in Spain, the number of Spaniards who did not answer (44.9 percent) was higher than that of Spaniards (32.2 percent) [sic].

Confidence in the PSOE

This question of whether the PSOE would govern better than the UCD also demonstrated that the confidence which Spaniards have in Felipe Gonzalez is very similar to that which they have in his party.

Thus, while 23.4 percent had more confidence in Felipe Gonzalez than in Adolfo Suarez, 26.2 percent of Spaniards believed that the PSOE would govern better than the UCD.

How about worse than the party now in the government? Only in the opinion of 4.5 percent would the Socialists do worse. For 30.7 percent the UCD and the PSOE would do equally well.

As long as these overtones of goodwill for the PSOE are present in Spanish public opinion the inference is that the Socialist party continues to be a genuine "alternative of power."

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The pollsters also asked the following question: Do you believe that the PSOE will accede to power within a maximum of 3 years? And indeed, there are many Spaniards who believe so in various degrees.

Those who placed their bets with their eyes closed that it will happen this way represented 5.6 percent of the respondents. A few more, up to a total of 25.9 percent, said "probably yes," and 13.7 percent qualified their answer with an uncertain "it depends."

From here down all the answers were worse for the Socialists: 12.2 percent of those polled said "probably not," 7.7 percent answered no with complete confidence, while 34 percent did not answer the question.

Now then, including the qualified category of "it depends," 45.2 percent of our fellow-citizens believed that Spain will have a Socialist government very much sooner than those mythical 107 years, during which, Suarez asserted, the UCD will govern Spain.

In terms of age, the most extreme results were found in the category comprised by "up to 34 years." The most confident responses—the 7.3 percent who said that yes, they were sure to accede to power and the 29.5 percent who answered probably yes, which places these percentages above the national average—and those having the greatest Socialist phobia—some 16.8 percent said that the PSOE will probably not accede to power and 12 percent answered no with certainty, these figures also being above the national average—were found in this age group.

Now then, we already have three set facts: There are more Spaniards who have greater confidence in Felipe Gonzalez than in Adolfo Suarez. There are also more of those who believe that if the PSOE were in power it would do better than the UCD. And finally there are more of those who think that the Socialists will come to power before 3 years go by than those who reject this idea or question it.

With such promising prospects what capability do Spaniards assign to the PSOE to govern the country? The possibilities of acceding to power, the charm of Felipe Gonzalez, and the strength of the party to govern—are these sufficient guaranties?

Once more, in this question, two results stand our causing some puzzlement: 26 percent of those polled noted that they did not know whether the PSOE had the ability to govern while 30.4 percent did not answer the question.

Of the rest, 8.5 percent answered that the Socialists were completely incapable of governing and 24.4 percent said that they were fairly capable of doing so.

In the range of negative responses for the PSOE, 7 percent answered that it had little ability and the remaining 3.6 percent did not mince words and said "no ability whatever" in their answer.

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One out of every three Spaniards conceded sufficient ability to the Socialists to govern Spain. The image of the PSOE continued to be positive in this respect. The pollsters of Metra Seis did not ask them why but did ask it of those who believe that the Socialists are little or not able to govern at all.

Between this little and nothing the Spaniards who fell into these two categories totaled 10.6 percent. Why does one out of 10 Spaniards think that those in the PSOE lack the ability to govern?

Little Trained

Within this group the largest number of negative responses is to be found in the category "lack of trained men." No fewer than 25.4 percent of those answering "little or not qualified at all to govern" said that the Socialists are so because of this lack of training.

This group was immediately followed by the 21.5 percent who argued that this lack or complete absence of ability to govern was due to the lack of responsibility of the Socialists, that they were not doing anything but talk, that they had achieved nothing, and that they were unable to settle things.

A smaller percentage explained the inability of the Socialists to govern by the fact that they are identified with the UCD--that was the opinion of 5.7 percent--while the remaining 12 percent said it was because it is difficult to govern and they are so nihilistic that for them no party is capable of doing so and they do not have confidence in anyone. Other responses including such asswers as "I dislike politics," for instance, and those who did not answer the question totaled 30.2 percent.

The range of responses left the Socialists well analyzed. However, something more needs to be known. For example, what alternatives of government would the respondents have liked most. Also, whether the opinion which each respondent held of the PSOE had improved or become worse.

No to Coalition

A government coalition, yes or no? In the last analysis that is the question. And the majority response was negative: 21.3 percent of Spaniards preferred that the Socialists govern alone.

How about a coalition between the PSOE and UCD? Only 10.4 percent expressed preference for this alternative which was undoubtedly smaller than the 16.9 percent of those who would have liked the PSOE to form a government with the other parties.

Among the four major coalition alternatives the one held least desirable was a government formed by the Socialists and communists, approved by us more than 9.1 percent of those polled.

There were also nihilists, such as the 13.8 percent who did not like any alternative, or the 23.6 percent who did not wish to answer the pollsters.

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And in the aggregate what was the opinion which Spaniards had of the PSOE? Has it improved or become worse? Apparently there was a tone of indifference If by indifference one understands that the largest percentage--38.3 percent-held the same opinion of the PSOE as it had since the latest elections.

In this respect, too, the Socialists were ahead of the UCD because those for whom "the PSOE has improved a lot" (4.9 percent) and those for whom "the PSOE has improved somewhat" (16.0 percent) totaled more than those for whom "it has worsened womewhat" (9.6 percent) and those for whom "it has worsened a lot" (4.0 percent).

Once again, however, we compare this question with the general tone of the poll: A high percentage--27.2 percent--did not wish to answer the question because the respondents did not know, did not have information, because of pure skepticism, lack of interest, disappointment, and so on.

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COUNTRY SECTION

SPAIN

BRIEFS

MILITARY PURCHASES—According to unofficial military sources consulted by the Europa Press Agency, the staff of the army will invest more than 20 billion pesetas this year in acquiring war material. The investments are part of the operational means program and their figure of 20,772,066 million pesetas is broken down as follows: 1,450 million for purchase and construction of war material and weapons; 3,400 million for purchase and construction of artillery; 520 million for engineering material; 1,800 million for topographic and war material; 1,500 million for communications equipment and material; 4,000 million for purchasing all types of combat vehicles; 1,800 million for purchase of helicopters; 3,500 million for the project for joint manufacture of "AMX-30" tanks; 2,800 million for purchase and manufacture of munitions. [Text] [Madrid DEFENSA in Spanish No 23, Mar 80 p 74] 11915

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COUNTRY SECTION

UNITED KINGDOM

COMMENTARY ON PROBLEMS IN BALANCING U.S., EUROPEAN INTERESTS

LD111157 London THE GUARDIAN in English 11 Jun 80 p 13

[Commentary by Peter Jenkins]

[Text] European summit meetings have a knack of failing to rise to occasions. Deprived of the British oudgetary contribution as a subject for squabble the nine heads of state or government who meet in the decaying magnificence of Venice tomorrow are perfectly capable of sinking into some new mire of contentious detail. If they can resist the temptation, however, this meeting of the European Council may come to be remembered as one of unusual importance.

An historic step is to be taken. More important than the small prine of the declaration which is to be made about the Arab-Israel conflict, which has been watered down a good deal under American and Egyptian pressure, is the fact that it is being made at all. Equally important is the context in which it is being made, namely the twin crises caused by the Iranian revolution and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. For the first time the nine members of the European Economic Communist are to define a common geo-strategic interest which lies beyond their regional boundaries.

In so doing they will be acting together in political unity and with an unusual degree of independence from the United States on a matter which, although it has important commercial implications, is one of common political and strategic concern for the alliance as a whole. It is a departure which could lead in either of two directions—towards a further deterioration of relations with the United States or towards a more balanced joint—strategy for containing Soviet influence in Southwest Asia and the Middle

President Carter is still trying to head off the European move with his latest endeavours to get the Camp David talks moving again. Meanwhile, Secretary of State Muskie has adopted a more accommodating fall-back position and is prepared to welcome as "constructive" an initiative which does not undermine the Camp David process. German cold feet or French prickliness towards the Americans could still influence the European Council's decisions but the plan at the moment is as follows.

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There will be from Venice on Friday a declaration which is to be followed by what is no longer called an initiative but rather "diplomatic activity." The text is expected to declare that the Palestinians "must be put in a position to exercise their right of self-determination within the framework of a comprehensive peace settlement." It does not recognise the Palestinian Liberation Organisation as, in the Arab phrase, "the sole legitimate representatives of the Palestinina people" but it does assert "a need for the association of the PLO in the negotiations."

This language does not go much beyond what was said on behalf of the EEC at the UN last September when there was reference to the "legitimate rights of the Palestinians" which were said to include a "homeland." Nevertheless, it remains, plainly, the community's intention to signal an important development in its position on the Palestinian question and to indicate its willingness to deal with the PLO as a principal, although not the sole, representative of Palestinian aspirations.

The "diplomatic activity" is expected to be conducted by Mr Gaston Thor, the foreign minister of Luxembourg, whose country succeeds in the EEC presidency at the end of this month. He may or may not be flanked by a mission drawn from other member countries. His task, in effect, will be to explore the grounds for a comprehensive settlement in discussion with all of the parties, including Israel, and all of the strands of Palestinian opinion including the PLO. Eventually any basis for a new negotiation, this time directly involving the Palestinians, would have to be given the force of a UN resolution but the idea of tabling a resolution before the American elections has been abandoned. There would be little point in simply provoking an American veto. Only France continues to hanker after this.

In London the government attaches great importance to the move because of the rapid deterioration of the situation on the West Bank and the growing instability of the Middle East as a whole. Lord Carrington believes that the next six months could bring a serious erosion of the Western position in the Middle East unless action is taken now. Events in Iran and Afghanistan have largely disqualified the U.S. in the eyes of the Arab world, which contrasts Washington's willingness to engage in sanctions and military threats in those situations with her refusal to apply pressure to Israel.

If matters were simply allowed to drift according to the British view, moderate Arab opinion, especially King Husayn, would be driven towards the militants; Iraq might be pushed back into the Soviet camp; and Arafat (seen still as a moderate influence) pushed still further back towards terrorism. The stability of the Saudi regime might become threatened and in Egypt President Sadat would find himself more and more dangerously isolated. Matters could deteriorate even to the point of armed conflict, in which case, there would be quick recourse to the oil weapon against the West.

For these reasons the cabinet, which meets specially today, is expected to endorse the European plan, although Mrs Thatcher has her reservations. She

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is loth to do business with any terrorist organisation, which is how she regards the PLO, and she has a substantial Jewish community in her constituency at Finchley. She is not prepared to take a position which the Americans would find it necessary to condemn publicly.

The "pro-Israel" party in the cabinet includes Mr Whitelaw, Sir Keith Joseph and Lord Hailsham and the Israeli lobby has been exceedingly active at Westminister and in Whitehall. Nevertheless, the cabinet is likely to recognise that Britain's weak and threatened position as a trading nation makes it virtually imperative that she does not lag behind her European partners, in a diplomacy welcome to the Arab world.

There is nevertheless, something of a delimma affecting British foreign policy at the moment. The widening of the Atlantic since President Carter came to office, and especially this year in the wake of the Iranian and Afghanistan crises, has made it more difficult than ever for Britain to strike a balance between her Atlantic and European ties and interests.

The government has agreed that the Indian Ocean island Diego Garcia should play an important and central role in the American scheme for containing Soviet military power in the Persian Gulf. The prime minister took the straightforward view that the U.S. could not be expected to defend the interests of the West in the region if the countries of the West were not prepared to help defend their own interests beyond their frontiers. None the less, Britain is bound to be seen as America's special partner in the Gulf and this has some obvious political dangers.

Britain's commercial interests in the Arab world have become crucial to her economic survival. They are founded in part on sentimental and historical ties and are vulnerable to rapidly growing French and German influence in the region. These are additional reasons why it is necessary for Britain to be in the fore of diplomatic moves towards bringing the Palestinians into the Middle East peaceseeking process.

The Americans have taken note of a cautious "distancing" of London from Washington in recent weeks. They pretend politely to accept the official explanation of what went wrong in parliament over the Iranian sanctions but stick privately to their more cynical interpretation. Low marks are given for the way the Olympic Games boycott was handled by Mrs Thatcher. The more enlightened layers of American officialdom would welcome these signs if they believed them to mean that Britain was willing and able to at last to play her full role in the inner counsels of a more United Europe. But that is not yet certain.

Mrs Thatcher's reluctance to accept the widely-welcomed settlement to the festering dispute over budgetary contributions did not suggest that there is any larger purpose to her diplomatic interventions. Her reacton may have been due partly to her inexperience and poor judgment in foreign affairs.

Partly it may have been due to a wish to keep the argument with Europe going for domestic political reasons; she is nervous of being outflanked by the Labour Party on what remains an unpopular issue. Or it may have been that she saw herself engaged in a single-handed crusade to reform the community's agricultural and financial structures, believing that aggressive brinkmanship was the only way.

Her behaviour has aroused resentments on the continent and they may take time to die away. Other contentious issues remain on the agenda. Notably fishing and energy policy. The vigorous and proper pursuit of British national interests within the community needs more than ever to be weighed against the political emergence of Europe vis-a-vis the United States and the perils which threaten Britain's commercial interests in the wider world. Put bluntly, Britain cannot afford to go on quarrelling with France and Germany.

The temporary relief of Britain's excessive budgetary contribution gives France and Germany, who are having to pay substantially more themselves, a new interest in reforming the common agricultural policy and the community's financial arrangements. These are now pressing problems for Europe as a whole and there is no need for Britain to go on with the counterproductive strategy of treating them as vital national interests.

Meanwhile, tomorrow's important meeting in Venice gives Britain a chance to play a constructive role in the political evolution of the Eruopean Community. A week later the leading members of the EEC will be in Venice again for the summit meeting with prime ministers of Canada and Japan. Then their task will be to begin, in the wake of Afghanistan, to define a new division of labour within the alliance, one which will reflect both its various interests and capabilities.

Britain's dilemma--torn between the United States and Europe--is incapable of unilateral resolution; it can be escaped only in the context of a redefinition of relations between the United States and a Europe of which Britain is a fully-functioning and whole-hearted part.

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